

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-11 ISO-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 AEC-11 AECE-00 MC-02 OMB-01

TRSE-00 SAJ-01 IO-14 DRC-01 /164 W

----- 022748

P R 311750Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0093

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USNMR SHAPE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 01689

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CAP, MARR, NATO, GW

SUBJECT: DECLASSIFICATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEPLOYMENTS

REF: STATE 5515

SUMMARY: PFEFFER (FONOFF NATO OFFICE DIRECTOR) AND

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BRANDT, DEPUTY CHIEF (MOD PLANS AND OPS) GAVE EMBOFF

JOINT FONOFF-MOD REACTIONS TO OUR PROPOSAL TO DECLASSIFY CERTAIN INFORMATION CONCERNING NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THE INFORMATION THEY CONVEYED WAS SPECIFICALLY CLEARED WITH MINISTERS SCHEEL AND LEBER AND REPRESENTS CONSIDERED GERMAN VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT. THE GERMANS ARE ALMOST TOTALLY NEGATIVE ON THE MATTER; THE SUBSTANCE OF POINTS GIVEN US FOLLOW BELOW. END SUMMARY.

1. ESSENTIALLY THE GERMANS SEE NO ADVANTAGES TO DECLASSIFYING INFORMATION ABOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS, ALTHOUGH IN THEORY THEY RECOGNIZE DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN SELECTIVE ITEMS COULD ADD TO THE OVERALL VALUE OF THE US STRATEGIC DETERRENT. HOWEVER, THEY SUSPECT THE SOVIETS KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT THE APPROXIMATE NUMBERS AND TYPES OF US WEAPONS IN EUROPE SO THAT THE INCREMENT OF DETERRENT VALUE GAINED BY DECLASSIFICATION WOULD BE LARGELY THEORETICAL AND MARGINAL. THE MOD DID NOT NECESSARILY OBJECT TO DISCLOSURE OF GROSS NUMBERS OF WEAPONS, EVEN THOUGH IT BELIEVED CALCULATED LEAKS OF THIS INFORMATION MIGHT BETTER SERVE THE DETERRENT PURPOSE. THE FONOFF, HOWEVER, RAISED VIGOROUS OBJECTIONS TO THE STEP BECAUSE OF THE DETRIMENTAL EFFECTS IT COULD HAVE ON MBFR TALKS. ALONG THE SAME LINE, THE MOD WAS PREPARED TO INVESTIGATE THE EFFECTS OF DECLASSIFICATION OF THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF VARIOUS DELIVERY SYSTEMS, BUT THE FONOFF AGAIN VIGOROUSLY OBJECTED ON THE GROUNDS OF THE MOVE'S PROSPECTIVE EFFECT ON MBFR NEGOTIATIONS.

2. THERE WERE NO OTHER DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE POINTS OF VIEW OF THE FONOFF AND MOD. THEY WERE IN TOTAL AGREEMENT THAT DECLASSIFICATION WOULD SET OFF LENGTHY PUBLIC SPECULATION AND DEBATE ABOUT THE PRESENCE AND PURPOSE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN FRG AND EUROPE. SOME PUBLIC DISCUSSION, THEY THOUGHT, MIGHT BE USEFUL INSOFAR AS IT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO REDUCING LATENT PUBLIC UNEASINESS ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS; A REASONED PUBLIC DISCUSSION COULD, IN THIS LINE OF THOUGHT, STRENGTHEN THE PUBLIC'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE STRATEGIC PROBLEMS FACING THE FRG. THIS, THEY THINK, COULD TAKE PLACE OVER THE LONG RUN, BUT IN THE NEAR

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TERM THEY ARE CONVINCED A DEBATE WOULD BE EMOTIONAL AND DETRIMENTAL TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S INTERESTS. THE RADICAL LEFT WOULD, FOR INSTANCE, HAVE A FIELD DAY PUSHING FOR THE REDUCTION OF NUCLEARS AND PLAYING ON PUBLIC FEARS WHICH ARE LIKELY TO BE FAR GREATER AFTER DECLASSIFICATION STEPS THAN NOW. THIS COULD CONCEIVABLY LEAD TO DEMONSTRATIONS AT UNITS OR INSTALLATIONS WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS. OFFICIALS BELIEVE THE RADICAL LEFT

COULD EASILY MANIPULATE HEIGHTENED PUBLIC INTEREST IN NUCLEARS TO FOCUS CRITICISM ON THE US, WITH RESULTING STRAINS IN OVERALL US-FRG RELATIONS. THE PRESENT SITUATION IS, IN THE FRG VIEW, PREFERABLE TO THE UNCERTAINTY WHICH WOULD NECESSARILY RESULT FROM DECLASSIFICATION.

3. ALL OF THIS COULD NOT HELP BUT INHIBIT, PROBABLY SEVERELY, ANY GERMAN GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO HANDLE NUCLEAR WEAPONS QUESTIONS. BRANDT CITED ONE CASE IN PARTICULAR. HE NOTED THAT IN MAJ. GEN. GILLER'S TESTIMONY LAST YEAR AT THE JOINT CONGRESSIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY COMMITTEE, HE BRIEFLY TOUCHED ON EUROPEAN (GERMAN) ATTITUDES TOWARD ADMS. GILLER'S COMMENTS WERE IMMEDIATELY PICKED UP BY GERMAN NEWSPAPERS ALL TOO EAGER

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TO PUBLICIZE THIS POLITICALLY EXPLOSIVE TOPIC. THE
UPSHOT OF THE INCIDENT WAS THAT MINISTER LEBER, WHO
WAS AT THAT TIME PRIVATELY SYMPATHETIC TOWARD ADMS, WAS
FORCED TO RECONSIDER HIS VIEW. HOWEVER, THE CRITICAL
COMMENTS WHICH GREETED GILLER'S TESTIMONY ACTED TO
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BRAKE ANY FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF ADMS BY THE DEFENSE
MINISTRY.

4. FINALLY, THEY BELIEVE DECLASSIFICATION COULD EASILY
EFFECT NATO COHESION AND DISTURB ALLIANCE SOLIDARITY.
WHETHER WE AGREE WITH THEM OR NOT, THE GERMANS HAVE NO
GREAT CONFIDENCE IN EUROPEAN READINESS TO FACE SOME OF
THE HARD PROBLEMS OF DEFENSE. THEY THINK THAT THE
PUBLIC DISCUSSION OR DEBATE WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM DE-
CLASSIFICATION WOULD INVOLVE ALL THE NATO COUNTRIES, AND
ALL NATO GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE SUBJECTED TO PRESSURE FROM
NEUTRALIST OR LEFTIST ELEMENTS. THE REACTIONS OF EACH
GOVERNMENT WOULD, OF COURSE, VARY ACCORDING TO ITS
DOMESTIC POLITICAL STRENGTH, BUT IN THE FRG VIEW, NATO
UNITY WITH REGARD TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND STRATEGY WOULD
BE BOUND TO SUFFER. BRANDT THOUGHT THAT
DECLASSIFICATION, IF IT WERE SUBSTANTIAL ENOUGH, COULD
ULTIMATELY RESULT IN THE ABILITY OF SOME NATO GOVERN-
MENTS TO MAINTAIN CURRENT DEFENSE EFFORTS.

5. THE FOREGOING IS THE CONSIDERED POSITION OF THE FRG
AND WAS REACHED ONLY AFTER MINISTERIAL STUDY. WE BE-
LIEVE IT IS A RELATIVELY ACCURATE AND BALANCED VIEW OF
THE SITUATION HERE. GIVEN THE FRG'S SENSITIVITY TO ALL
NUCLEAR PROBLEMS AND THE STRENGTH OF THEIR REACTION TO
THE DECLASSIFICATION PROPOSAL, IT IS OBVIOUS WE SHOULD
TAKE NO STEPS ON THE MATTER UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT HAS HAD AN
OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY IN DEPTH ANY SPECIFIC DECLASSIFI-
CATION PROPOSAL WE THINK SHOULD BE PUT INTO EFFECT.
HILLENBRAND

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